



**MATCH**  
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Protecting Connecticut's Health

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**Testimony in Support of SB 1007  
The Governor's Budget  
March 7, 2011**

Senator Daily, Representative Widlitz and members of the Committee:

My name is Dr. Pat Checko. I am Chairman of the statewide MATCH Coalition (Mobilize Against Tobacco for Connecticut's Health). MATCH supports SB 1007 that would increase the current cigarette tax from \$3.00 per pack to \$3.40 per pack and impose tax increases on "nongarette smoking tobacco".

Roll-your-own tobacco is smoked just like any other cigarette and is just as deadly. The lack of warnings on pipe tobacco is particularly troubling because pipe smoke contains the same toxic mix of substances found in cigarette and cigar smoke: roughly 4,000 compounds, over 40 of which are known to cause cancer in humans and animals. Burning tobacco -- in pipes or cigarettes -- also produces a huge number of combustion products. Like cigarettes, pipe tobacco contains nicotine, a powerful nerve stimulant that's the primary cause of addiction to tobacco

A 2004 National Cancer Institute study followed 138,307 men -- more than 15,000 of whom smoked pipes -- over a period of 18 years. The study found that pipe smoking was associated with increased mortality caused by lung, oropharynx, esophageal, larynx, pancreatic, and colorectal cancers, as well as cardiovascular disease, when compared to the nonsmokers in the study. The researchers reported, "Pipe smoking confers a risk of tobacco-associated disease similar to cigar smoking."

Taxing bulk tobacco purchases should have the same health effect on users as increasing cigarette taxes has had on persons who smoke cigarettes. It is another strategy to reduce the prevalence of smoking and the health effects and costs associated with them. Research has reported that each 10% cigarette price increase reduces youth smoking rates by 6.5%, adult rates by 2%, and total consumption by 4% (but adjusted down to account for tax evasion effects). Revenues still increase because the higher tax rate per pack will bring in more new revenue than is lost from the tax-related drop in total pack sales.

When the price of cigarettes went up, there were increases in the use of chewing tobacco and snuff by youth. Rates of snuff use among high school students increased from 4% to 8% in two years.

We respectfully ask the committee to amend the bill to dedication of a small portion of the anticipated revenue towards funding Medicaid coverage of smoking cessation services.

Coverage of smoking cessation services would also allow for an increase in Federal reimbursements. Currently, there is a 50% match with government funds with a Medicaid waiver.

**MOBILIZE AGAINST TOBACCO FOR CONNECTICUT'S HEALTH**